

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 EB-11

COME-00 MC-02 ACDA-19 SS-20 NSC-07 NEA-14 DRC-01 /145 W

----- 106792

R 311814Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 964

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

CINCUSAFE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BRUSSELS 3686

E.O. 11652; NA

TAGS: MASS, NATO, BE

SUBJECT: REPLACEMENT FOR F-104; GENERAL DYNAMICS PRESS
CONFERENCE

REF: BRUSSELS 3283

1. FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE PRESS COVERAGE RESULTING
FROM THE GENERAL DYNAMICS OFFICIALS MEETING WITH BELGIAN
AVIATION WRITERS DESCRIBED REFTEL.

2. MASS-CIRCULATION CONSERVATIVE HET LAATSTE NIEUWS (5/28),
CATHOLIC LE RAPPEL (5/29), AND CATHOLIC HET BELANG VAN LIMBURG
(5/29) CARRIED BELGA NEWS AGENCY REPORT ON
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GENERAL DYNAMICS CORPORATION "YF 16" AS A POSSIBLE

REPLACEMENT FOR THE F-104G CURRENTLY USED BY THE
BELGIAN AIR FORCE.

3. REPORT SAID THAT UNDER GD'S PROPOSAL 318 AIRCRAFT
WOULD BE CONSTRUCTED AND ASSEMBLED BY CONSORTIUM OF
EUROPEAN FIRMS WORKING TOGETHER WITH GD AND UNITED AIR-
CRAFT CORPORATION. 70 PERCENT OF PURCHASING PRICE PER
UNIT WOULD BE ATTRIBUTED TO BELGIUM UNDER THE FORM OF
ECONOMIC COMPENSATIONS IN THE FIRST PHASE, REPORT SAID.
HET LAATSTE NIEUWS CARRIED REPORT UNDER HEADING "AMERICAN
FIRM OFFERS PLANSE AND JOBS TO BELGIUM".

4. INFLUENTIAL CONSERVATIVE CATHOLIC LA LIBRE BELGIQUE
(5/28) CARRIED REPORT BY ITS AVIATION WRITER MICHEL MATHOT,
BASED ON SAME BELGA DISPATCH. MATHOT NOTED THAT "UP TO
PRESENT ONLY MIRAGE F-1, HAS BEEN OCCASION OF (SIMILAR)
FIRM AND PRECISE PROPOSALS". MATHOT FURTHER WROTE THAT
"U.S. GOVERNMENT WILL NOT FAIL TO SUPPORT, EVEN FINANCIALLY,
PROPOSALS OF AMERICAN FIRMS. IT IS NORMAL, BUT IT GIVES
TO THIS RACE FOR REPLACEMENT OF F-104 CHARACTER OF SMALL
AMERICAN-EUROPEAN CHALLENGE". LA LIBRE ON MAY 29 CARRIED
PICTURE OF YF-16.

5. INFLUENTIAL CATHOLIC DE STANDAARD'S AVIATION WRITER
GUIDO KINDT OBSERVED (5/28) THAT "NOW THAT THE DICE ARE
VIRTUALLY CAST, ANOTHER AMERICAN FIRM SUDDENLY COMES TO
BELGIUM TO OFFER STILL ANOTHER REPLACEMENT FOR OUR
STARFIGHTERS." KINDT CONTINUED THAT " IN LISTENING
TO ARGUMENTS OF GENERAL DYNAMICS ONE HAS IMPRESSION
THAT THEY HAVE ATTENDED ALL PRESS CONFERENCE OF THEIR
COMPETITORS AND COPIED THEIRS FROM THEM..."
BOOCHEVER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY AIRCRAFT, MILITARY EQUIPMENT, MILITARY PROCUREMENT, PRESS COMMENTS, PRESS CONFERENCES, BUSINESS FIRMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BRUSSE03686
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740138-0791
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974054/aaaaadjl.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BRUSSELS 3283
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <13 JUN 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REPLACEMENT FOR F-104; GENERAL DYNAMICS PRESS CONFERENCE
TAGS: MASS, BE, US, NATO, GENERAL DYNAMICS CORP, UNITED AIRCRAFT CORP
To: STATE DOD
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005